

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**North Summit High School
76 South 100 East
Coalville, Utah 84017**

April 15-16, 2004



Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
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**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**North Summit High School
76 South 100 East
Coalville, Utah 84017**

April 15-16, 2004

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Salt Lake City, Utah

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FOREWORD

A major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate inservice growth and school improvement. Consequently, requirements include not only meeting the standards of the Utah State Office of Education, but also completing a school evaluation every six years.

School evaluation is that effort by the local school staff to take a comprehensive look at the school's program, operation, and effect. The school determines how closely its purposes and philosophy coincide with its actual practices and the degree to which its stated objectives are being reached. It is a three-phased program: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, April 15-16, 2004, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to meet the requirements referred to above.

The entire staff of North Summit High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the Visiting Team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Jerre Holmes is commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for the generally fine program being provided for North Summit High School students, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more adequately meet the needs of the students of North Summit High School.

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Interim State Superintendent
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10/30/03

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NORTH SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Jerre Holmes Principal
Brett Richins Assistant Principal

Counseling

John Jaussi Counselor
Rhonda Butcher Counselor's Secretary

Support Staff

Kathy Chappell Principal's Secretary
Robin Wilde Attendance Secretary
Arlene Burgener Technology Director
Barbi DeWeese Resource Aide
Diane Holmes EDNET Facilitator
Brad Matthews Resource Officer
Gloria Mills ESL Aide
Janalee Potter Remediation Facilitator
Jeanette Vernon C.N.A. Instructor

Faculty

Nancy Bates	Kelly Paskett	Katie Silcox
Roger Crittenden	Kelly Richins	Chad Staley
Barbara Den Boer	Steve Richins	Jon Warnick
Martha Furse	Lanae Ritzman	Hannah Wilde
Kurt Goodman	David Ruf	Lori Williams
Russell Judd	Kent Rushton	
Julie Marsh	Diana Saxton	

NORTH SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

We will ensure an environment where all students may receive opportunities to help them reach individual goals and successfully contribute to society.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

(North Summit High School has not yet completed its belief statements.)

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Mary Kay Kirkland, Box Elder School District, Visiting Team Chairperson

Craig Jessop, North Ogden Junior High, Weber County School District

Jeff Meyer, Roy High School, Weber County School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

NORTH SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

North Summit High School has a long, rich history of community support for educational excellence. The current high school building was built in 1977 in Coalville, a small mining and agricultural community of around 2,300 residents just east of Park City. The area is rural, but not as agriculture-driven as it was a few decades ago. The community is mostly Caucasian, with a small Hispanic population. There is little ethnic or economic diversity. There is a strong multigenerational population that provides stability and tradition to the school and the community. The school draws students from several small towns and communities throughout the region. There are currently 298 students attending North Summit High School in grades 9 through 12. The population has been fairly stable, but this year's freshman class has approximately 20 fewer students than each of the other three classes in the school. In 1980 the school was remodeled to include a beautiful, state-of-the-art auditorium, which is used extensively by the community. In February of 2004, a successful bond election was held to provide funding for much-needed construction and remodeling at each school in the district. The high school plans to add several classrooms and a student commons area in the near future.

a) *What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?*

The school profile helped the leadership team identify areas of strength and areas of concern at North Summit High School. The team was excited to realize that, through the diligence of the assistant principal and the attendance secretary in employing some research-based strategies, the overall student attendance had increased significantly over the past year.

The noted decline in the number of parents attending parent-teacher conferences was balanced out by the documented number of parents accessing student achievement and attendance data online through the schoolwide use of Power School.

The student assessment data indicated that while CRT scores in Language Arts are increasing, the SAT Language Arts scores have remained flat at just below the 50th percentile for the past five years. In further analyzing the SAT subtest scores, the leadership team has discovered that the areas of lowest performance in Language Arts are pre-writing and editing. This has led to the proposal of an action plan to increase reading and writing scores for all students.

The identification and documentation of non-English-speaking students in the school has led to the inclusion of an ESL class in the daily class schedule.

The Community Council was very impressed with the profile and excited to have access to information about the improvement efforts in the school to share with parents and other members of the community.

- b) *What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

The Visiting Team recommends further disaggregation and analysis of student achievement data. It is difficult for teachers and/or parents to understand who is learning and who is not learning from the data presented in the current profile. It is also difficult to determine what corrections, adjustments, or additions need to be made to the curriculum without further analysis and information concerning student performance on subtests in each content area. A summary of the information provided, including identification of student groups requiring additional interventions for success, is encouraged.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Although the staff has done a very good job of including essential data in the profile to ensure the greatest possibility of success in their efforts to improve student learning at North Summit High School, the Visiting Team recommends that the leadership team and faculty take additional time to analyze the data contained in the profile to align action plans to the student achievement data, survey results, focus group and departmental analyses, and DRSLs.
- Provide analysis and summary of disaggregated student achievement data (see above).

CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

Interviews with parents and students made it clear that the entire school community was invited to participate in the accreditation process. The self-study has been the focus of Community Council meetings, leadership team meetings, and faculty meetings for over a year. One area of strength noted by the Visiting Team is the amount of survey information collected from all stakeholders involved in the school community. The challenge for the leadership team is how

to incorporate the feedback received from the staff, student, and community surveys into the action plans of the school.

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The leadership team did a thorough job of assessing the school through demographic data, assessment data, departmental reports, and focus group results. The challenge for the leadership team is to analyze all of that information and align the goals of the action plan to the information provided in the profile.

CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

North Summit High School's desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are as follows:

1. Lifelong Learning
2. Complex Thinking
3. Effective Communication
4. Collaboration
5. Responsible Citizenship
6. Employability

Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

There is evidence to indicate that the entire faculty was involved in the development of the mission and philosophy statements. The Community Council and student government also verified and gave their approval of the process and the finished product. The leadership team has been meeting regularly to analyze the data documented in the profile and to incorporate the mission into the improvement efforts of the school.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

Belief statements are not specifically identified in the school profile. The school has formulated a philosophy statement that relates a general direction to guide the school, but student achievement is not explicitly addressed as a part of that

philosophy. The Visiting Team recommends that the school staff spend some time collaborating on a specific set of belief statements to guide the improvement work of the staff in carrying out the mission identified by the stakeholders.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

There is a correlation between the school's mission statement and the DRSLs. The alignment between the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs would be enhanced by a more defined set of belief statements. The Visiting Team recommends that the staff revisit the process of coming to consensus on the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs to expand the number of belief statements and scale down the number of DRSLs. Having a more solid philosophical base and fewer desired results for student learning will help teachers to successfully integrate the DRSLs into their curricula.

Curriculum Development:

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

The teachers in each department have made a sincere effort to align their curricula to the standards and objectives of the Utah Core Curriculum. The curriculum in each classroom is focused on supporting and challenging all students to excel in their learning. Efforts have been made in some classes to align teaching strategies, instructional support and resources, and assessments of student learning with the curriculum.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

The climate of the school is one of open communication and collegial interaction. Because of the small size of the school, many departments have only one faculty member, and some staff members teach in several different departments. While the number of teachers in each content area makes coordination and alignment of curricula within a department easy to accomplish, it also makes it difficult for teachers to find the time to collaborate based on the number and variety of courses they are assigned to teach. The Visiting Team recommends that the administration look for creative ways to find, bank, or allocate time for teachers to collaborate in critical areas such as aligning curricula and designing and implementing an assessment system for the DRSLs.

Quality Instructional Design:

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

The Visiting Team observed the professional staff utilizing a wide variety of instructional strategies with students. These strategies included direct instruction, lectures, computer presentations, class discussions, student presentations, journals, creative writing, and hands-on projects. There are many state-of-the-art computers available for student use, with about one computer for every three students in the school. North Summit students have excellent opportunities to participate in learning experiences involving technology.

- b) *To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

It was obvious that the teachers were consciously aware of the need to vary the activities and instructional strategies to meet the learning needs of the individual students within the classroom. The Visiting Team observed many teachers making accommodations and granting additional time so students could finish tasks or improve performance. This year, for the first time, the school has identified the need to add an ESL class to the daily schedule to provide more support to new students who are not proficient in English. The teachers were very accepting of the inclusion of special education students in their classes. Students appeared to be comfortable in their learning environment, as well as engaged with other students during the entire class period.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

High-achieving students have many opportunities to enhance their education, including concurrent enrollment classes taught by North Summit teachers on the high school campus, concurrent enrollment classes delivered over the EDNET system from three different colleges, work-based learning assignments in the surrounding communities, vocational programs at Mountainland ATC, a home construction project, and tutoring for various content areas in the school. The Counseling Department was very proud of the fact that this year there will be nine students who will graduate from North Summit High School with their associate's degrees.

There are also quite a few supports in place for students who are struggling academically, including tutoring provided by peers as a course requirement for upper-level math classes, a daily ESL class, before- and after-school help from teachers, and the Power School online database, which provides daily information to parents concerning student performance and attendance as well as daily assignments. Teachers, community members, and students commented that all

teachers are willing to meet before school and after school with students who need extra help.

Quality Assessment Systems:

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or schoolwide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

Each staff member has developed classroom assessments based on his/her individual expectations for student achievement. The methods of assessment used in individual classrooms are aligned to the type of achievement to be assessed. The Visiting Team observed oral presentations, music performances, student projects, pencil-and-paper assessments, class discussions, and student demonstrations. The next step will be for the staff to collaboratively design either schoolwide assessments or schoolwide rubrics to evaluate classroom performance on identified performance targets for the DRSLs.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

The selection of the method of assessing student learning is usually based on the type of learning to be assessed, and the purpose of the assessment. Students in this school have many varied opportunities to demonstrate and apply the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom. Art students are involved in a landscaping project, computer students participate in multimedia presentations, biology and wildlife students work with natural resource personnel to assist animals in their natural habitat, and all students participate in a grade-level-specific service project. These students don't just sit in the classroom; they are given multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

Assessments of student learning and grading practices are fair. In most cases, performance standards and criteria for judging student performance are clearly defined and applied in an equitable manner. Students requiring accommodations are mainstreamed into regular classes but monitored on a consistent basis by special ed. personnel. There is a high degree of collaboration on effective accommodations and teaching strategies between special education personnel and regular teachers who have students on IEPs in their classes. The special education staff assesses students requiring additional support beyond the classroom one on one.

Leadership for School Improvement:

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

The current administrative team at North Summit has been extremely diligent in fostering an academic learning climate that actively supports teaching and learning. In response to faculty and student concerns, classroom interruptions have been minimized and announcements are only made before school, after school, or during the 5th period advisory time. Because the students involved in producing the yearbook have, in the past, interrupted classes for pictures and interviews, the yearbook class is also being scheduled to coincide with 5th period advisory time. The administration has also limited pep assemblies to state competitions to lessen their impact on academic courses.

Administrators are making increasing efforts to actively support quality teaching and learning by spending time in teachers' classes; meeting with the leadership team, focus groups, and departmental chairs; focusing the school improvement efforts on reading and writing; and providing resources to support classroom instruction and activities.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

In a small school, it is relatively easy to get teachers actively involved in the decision-making process. Teachers serve on various committees to provide input on decisions affecting the instructional process. One specific example of data-driven, research-based decision making by the leadership is the attendance process. The assistant principal has researched best practices in improving student attendance, he and the attendance secretary keep accurate attendance data, and they follow up with effective strategies involving contacting parents and requiring students to work off time missed. This process has resulted in an enviable 98 percent attendance rate during this school year.

The administration has identified the need to become more knowledgeable about using student achievement data to inform decisions concerning curriculum and instruction. This concern is addressed in one of the school's action plans.

- c) *To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

The school actively monitors student progress in a variety of ways: (1) Teachers and administrators examine student grade point statistics at the end of each grading period. (2) The administration meets with department chairs concerning standardized assessment data. (3) The principal meets with the School

Community Council to study and provide feedback about student academic achievement data. (4) During their senior year, students are monitored continually to make sure they are on track to graduate and are provided with opportunities to be successful at the next academic level.

The administration has expressed a desire to spend more time reviewing assessment data to identify and develop appropriate interventions to improve student learning.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

Most of the schoolwide policies and operational procedures are consistent with the school's mission and are designed for the purpose of maximizing student learning. The school has a well-developed "Crisis Plan" that has been put into play more often than the administration would like. In addition, the school just completed a simulation of a disaster in which they evacuated all of the students by bus to an alternate location. The school takes the responsibility of providing a safe environment seriously. There is a resource officer on staff who also teaches one period a day, and the school has its safety policies analyzed by law enforcement personnel to align school and community practices and expectations.

While this is not an extremely high-socioeconomic-status school district, it has sufficient resources to meet the needs of students and staff. Since the district has very few staff members, teachers, and administrators are actively involved in managing supply budgets. Teachers are allowed to select their own teaching materials and supplies, purchase their own equipment, and identify needed professional development. The administration has been actively involved in facilitating and monitoring these activities.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSs, and school improvement efforts?*

Discussions with administrators and teachers indicate that the administration consistently allocates resources aligned with school improvement efforts. Priority is given to resources used in the classroom, with the community, Booster Club, and PTSA picking up many of the expenses associated with extracurricular activities. Because of the limited number of staff members at the district level, the teachers at North Summit are much more involved in classroom-level decisions concerning the purchase of materials, textbooks, supplies, and equipment than most teachers. School leaders have helped teachers to see this as a positive opportunity to collaborate on purchasing supplies and equipment that can be shared and utilized in various content areas.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

The school leadership team has communicated to parents, students, teachers, and the community at large that their input and participation is important to the success of the school. The number of parent volunteers who help with school activities on a regular basis is phenomenal. Teachers are not as concerned with contractual obligations as they are with helping students succeed. All of the teachers and administrators live in the small community, and most of them attended this school. Parent, student, and teacher interviews made it clear that everyone feels an affinity for the school and is willing to share in the responsibility for the success of North Summit High School.

Community Building:

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

Throughout the school, teachers and staff members appear to have good working relationships with each other. There were many positive comments made about what other faculty members were doing in their classrooms and programs that are being provided to enhance students' education. Parents, teachers, and students commended the administrators for their leadership and the positive change they have brought to the school climate since their appointment.

Students commented that they could go to their teachers for help with assignments and that teachers are not only accessible, but willing to spend as much extra time as necessary before and after school to assist students. The Student Council commented that students are very comfortable in this school. There are few issues with social status, and students are friendly and accept new members of the student body openly.

Teachers expressed a desire for more time to collaborate among themselves for team building and to share information and best practices.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

The school is the focal point of this small community. Many community members attend school activities even when they personally do not have children involved. The community supports the school's fundraising efforts through the newly formed Booster Club. Any school group or organization can apply to the Booster Club for financial assistance. Volunteers from the community also donate many hours toward Sterling Scholar mock interviews, PTSA dances and luncheons, the National Honor Society, and the newly revitalized Community

Council. Ticket sales and concessions at athletic events are also run by community volunteers.

The school staff has also identified many projects students can participate in to enhance their community. Students in the art classes have recently designed a plan to give back to the community by providing landscaping along the road leading to the high school. The Student Council sponsors a grade-level service project to promote community building each year. As has been mentioned before, there are concurrent enrollment programs, work-based learning, and internship opportunities that extend the learning environment into the community.

Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

The school has done some preliminary staff development on assessment data and the integration of technology into the classroom. Teachers have also had opportunities to individually attend workshops and classes outside the district. However, the administration and the staff have recognized the need for ongoing professional development and collaboration time focused on the school's action plans and assessment of the DRSLs.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

The climate for change has been greatly enhanced by the current administration. Administrators have encouraged change and supported initiatives for change by asking for input from the staff and community. The Visiting Team noted several positive comments by faculty, parents, and students with regard to the influence the current administration has had on changing the school climate. Because of the willingness of the staff to support the leadership team and create the best learning environment for students, further substantial growth and change are likely as professional development plans focused on the school's improvement plan are implemented.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI

Standard I – Educational Program

This standard has been met.

Standard II – Student Personnel Services

This standard has been met.

Standard III – School Plant and Equipment

This standard has been met.

Standard IV – Library Media Program

This standard has been met.

Standard V – Records

This standard has been met.

Standard VI – School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)

This standard has been met.

Standard VII – Preparation of Personnel

This standard has been met.

Standard VIII – Administration

This standard has been met.

Standard IX – Teacher Load

This standard has been met.

Standard X – Activities

This standard has been met.

Standard XI – Business Practices

This standard has been met.

CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

- a) *To what extent is the schoolwide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

The school has developed a set of schoolwide action plans. However, additional study, development, and collaboration need to be done to correlate the plans with the data, DRSLs, focus group reports, departmental reports, and the school's mission and beliefs to ensure that the plans address the most critical areas for follow-up.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan,, schoolwide and systemwide?*

The school has made extraordinary strides in uniting parents, students, and staff members around the goal of improving North Summit High School. The leadership team recognizes that this self-study is the beginning of a six-year process to implement their plan. Once the plan is aligned with the component parts of the self-study, the Visiting Team is confident that the school has the commitment to carry out the action plan.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the schoolwide action plan appear to be?*

The school has identified action steps, time lines, people, resources, assessments, and reporting methods for each action plan. As the leadership team revises the plans to reflect the study of profile data and the collaboration of community and staff members, the follow-up process already in place should be sufficient for monitoring the accomplishments of the schoolwide action plan.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the school on providing an exceptional climate for student learning. The students, staff, and administrators are warm, friendly, and caring in their interactions with parents and with each other. The focus throughout the school is on continuous improvement; whether in academics or athletics, each person is encouraged to do his/her best.

- The Visiting Team commends the school on its efforts to involve parents and community members in the school program. The number of hours parents spend volunteering at the school and the number of activities they participate in show an extraordinary commitment to student success.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for its efforts in providing a multitude of options for students to participate in extended learning opportunities, beyond earning credits toward graduation. These opportunities include partnerships with universities, the option to earn an associates degree, and the relationship with the Mountainland ATC.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for providing hands-on classroom and extracurricular activities in which students can apply their learning to real-life situations. These opportunities include student performances, clubs, service-learning, home construction, wildlife management, and landscaping.
- The Visiting Team commends the school administration for its thoughtful leadership in guiding the school through this process, and for the direction it provides to students and faculty members every school day. During the two-day visit, the Visiting Team was informed many times by teachers, students, and parents about the focus, attitude, and attention to detail provided by the administrative team.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that the school revisit the desired results for student learning to identify two or three DRSLs to focus on for this first length of accreditation. To design assessment systems for and incorporate six DRSLs into the school program will be an overwhelming task for teachers as they also focus on effective instruction and student learning. As part of that process, the Visiting Team also recommends that the school revisit the belief statements to identify those things that are of most value to this school and community.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school staff and leadership team examine each part of the school profile to determine the direction and priority of the goals for the action plans. Thoughtful work has been done, and the right people have been involved in the process required for the profile, but the pieces are not aligned to the goals and strategies outlined in the action plan.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the leadership team and staff provide more disaggregation and analysis of the data included in the profile. In looking at the data, it is impossible to determine who is learning and where the gaps are. A summary of the data would help parents, teachers, and community members identify areas for improvement.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the administration find creative ways to provide time for teachers to collaborate and participate in schoolwide professional development on designing assessments systems for the DRSLs and accomplishing the goals identified in the action plans.